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AMERICAN TELEGRAPH.

From Dickens's Household Words.

THE BIRTH AND PARENTAGE OF LETTERS.

In so far as the perfection of materials for writing and the facility of means for sending latters are concerned, we may have little more to hope for in this country. Our paper and ink are materials so perfectly adapted for their purpose, that it is difficult to imagine in what way they can be substantially bettered by inventors that shall be hereafter. Quill pens, to be sure, have to be superseded; but in order that this their destiny may be accomplished, steel or metallic pens have to be very much improved. They are improving steadily. In the matter of transmission, though there is scarcely a grander civil institution in the world than our English postal system, we dare still rely upon the march of science for increased rapidity of transit; and, consequently, increased frequency of communication. Letters will hereafter be absolutely sent more rapidly from hand to hand, and, what is more immediately practicable, the powers of the electric telegraph, from being a rare luxury, have to become vulgarized and pressed into service for the important correspondence of the million. Then, too, we may have, some of these days, that is to say, in "the good time coming," an ocean penny post.

It is a terrible thing, however, to remember that while paper, pens, and ink, are placed in such a perfect state beside the fingers of the people; while the national resources offer to every man incredible facility for the transmission of his bit of mind to a distance when he has written it, yet millions among us cannot grapple with a pen, and are but dimly conscious even that they have a bit of mind wherefrom they could indite a letter. It is as bad with them as it was with the whole world thousands of years ago, in those very prime Old Times which are laid up in Bin No. 1 of History.

We should respect those little scraps which men who have been educated to the handling of a pen are daily sending abroad, and receiving from the hands of postmen—in London hourly—at their doors; we should respect those little scraps which are called letters, if they were not so thoroughly familiar that we can scarcely conjure up a notion of the difficult and slow degrees through which the power of thus speaking to the absent was attained by man. It is a marvel of art, which has become, like nature's marvels, part of our daily life; a thing that seems almost more necessary to us, in a civilized condition, than our legs, though, by-the-by, if the whole community were legless, we should soon find out that what can be dispensed with by an individual, may nevertheless be essential to a race. Few of us, then, can even by an effort abstract in our minds the art of letter-writing from all its familiar relations, so as to obtain a full sense of its being marvellous. Let us help the imagination by an anecdote. In the Brazils, a slave was sent once by a gentleman to his friend with a basket of figs and a letter. The bearer was of course illiterate—for those who enslave the bodies of men, make it a rule to keep the light of the contained mind from being kindled. The slave liked figs, and ate a number of them, but his theft was detected when he reached his destination, because the accompanying letter told exactly what the basket should contain. The thief was greatly puzzled to conceive by what spell the letter was enabled to tell tales about him; but the next time he went with fruit, and his mouth watered for a share of it, he determined that the paper should not tattle; so he put it underneath a large stone, and then sat upon the stone; there he was safe against the spy, and having taken his refreshment, he released the letter, and completed the remainder of his duty. To his dismay, again the talisman testified against him, and brought down the whip upon his back. Now, let us go back and briefly trace the origin of this tale-bearing invention; let us inquire what were the first letters like, and who were the first of the letter-writers?

Let us take a voyage to some far isle in the Pacific Ocean, where the savages are perfectly untutored. They may resemble civilized men as they were in the best or oldest of Old Times. Do they write letters to each other? Not exactly, but they write. The first writing is never private and confidential; it is a "Know all men by these presents," scratched upon some rock. These men have minds yet utterly uncultivated; they cannot advance far in cultivation, for no written records give to their present the vantage ground of a true knowledge of the past. Except some vague traditions, and some rough practical knowledge that has been perpetuated by familiar use, the knowledge of one man consists in just so much as he can discover for himself during the period which elapses between the first day on which he can totter in his infancy, and the last day on which he can totter in his age. The material universe prompts his ideas—there is nothing transcendental in his humor; his supernatural ideas are only of rocks, water-falls, and storms, and men, magnified and distorted by the play of an untrained imagination. He can talk about nothing, or almost nothing, but trees, huts, animals, things visible in form. Of such things the idea can be communicated without speech, by scratching their outline on a tree or rock. Does he hold any animal sacred, and has he devoted any sequestered corner of the forest to the purposes of worship, he will naturally indicate that fact to himself, and all whom it may concern, by a rude figure of the god upon the nearest surface suitable for the reception of a drawing. Stone—a rock—he would choose naturally, as having a smooth, hard surface, as being fixed and durable. If anywhere in the wilds he should distinguish himself as a warrior or a hunter, he would desire to make his mark against the place for a perpetual memorial of the achievement. Men, weapons, and animals, would thus come to be scratched upon the rocks in figure somewhat similar to those which the young gentlemen and ladies at a preparatory school are in the habit of eliminating on their slates. Such marks—not symbols, but in all cases direct attempts at the imitation of some visible object which the artist had in his mind—such marks are all the writing that is found to this day in many of the Pacific Islands, and they jot a note down of the first step which mankind took upon the road to our mail-trains and penny-post of 1851.

What was the second step? An obvious one. It would soon be felt that a figure of eight, with two strokes for a pair of legs, and two strokes for a pair of arms, would do to express man in general, but that each hero wanted to commemorate his own deed in particular. Among the lower animals, plants, and objects of dead nature, each in its kind was found to have a certain character, while men found in each other characters and dispositions varying exceedingly. Where tribes, and the relations among them, multiplied at all, it would be necessary for each man to distinguish the members of his own connection, about whom he would often have to speak when they were absent, by some name. That object in nature which most resembled him in character would be almost the only name that could be thought of by a tribe whose life and thoughts were bound within the limit of their bodily perceptions. So one man would be called the ox, and one the serpent; their encampments would require names at a later stage of social progress, and would receive names, upon which would, by that time, be constituted the established principle. All this would lead to that improvement in rock-writing which we find among the Mexican inscriptions. A man is figured, and before his mouth is placed a little object—a dove, or serpent, for example—which stands there to signify the name of the individual whom it was intended to depict. By means of writing of this kind, it would obviously be impossible to communicate any complex information; and at this time portable inscriptions could not in any way assist the business of common life.

Coeval with the use of names signifying qualities, and drawn from the outer world, there would arise a habit of attaching external ideas of matter to internal ideas of the mind; courage, cowardice, prudence, &c., would be represented habitually by emblems; the soul would begin to turn the world of matter to its own high use, and there would arise that figurative language, that poetry, which is the habitual language of all savage communities that have made the first two or three steps towards the development of human power. Ideas, which exist only in the mind, would now begin to multiply and preponderate over ideas founded upon bodily sensation. The world without would become more and more a storehouse of emblems to be used for the depiction of a world within. A lion for strength, a serpent for subtlety—objects would now commonly be drawn to represent ideas; and now the writing still scratched upon rocks and walls would be sufficient to communicate much information to all those who were accustomed to the symbols.

Let us imagine, now, that a community of men which has advanced so far in its writing powers, and proportionately in the other branches of its civilization, having formed into a rude State, makes war on another rude State at a distance, speaking another language. It is victorious, and brings home captive a chief, with a barbarous name, like nothing in the language of the victors. The triumph must be written on a rock; but how is the name of the vanquished enemy to be recorded? Glory forbid that it should not be put to shame. Here there would present itself a difficulty to be mastered, and there would be but one way in which it could be overcome. The spoken name being a series of sounds, it could be written, if the sounds contained in it could be recorded. In this way there would arise, and did arise, a new use of material objects, as phonetic signs; so to this day the Chinese, whose native writing is an elaborate representation of ideas by objects, (ideographic,) represent foreign names to native ears in this phonetic way, as rudely as we might express the sound of the word "artifice" by the three figures which stand for heart—eye—fish.

Our own alphabets, we know, are, in the present day, thoroughly "phonetic"—each letter represents a sound; and as we put letters together on paper, so we put sounds together on our lips. It will be curious to show how men, slowly and carefully, still felt their way out of darkness, and by what slow stages we travelled from the first necessity for a phonetic scrap, down to our present system. The inquiry is not foreign to our purpose, since our purpose is to show how, generation after generation, man has had to toil and struggle onward to obtain that power which is to-day exercised familiarly by the Miss Julia Mills, who, living in London, sends the overflowings of her heart, under half an ounce in weight, to her most confidential friend at Newcastle.

We find one step to the extended use of a phonetic system, when we pass from the Chinese to the matured practice of the ancient Egyptians. The Egyptian hieroglyphics contain much that is phonetic in them. They are written upon three systems at once. Where an Egyptian, sculpturing some story, had to express a word that signified a visible object, easy to figure, there he simply figured it, and put three dots thereafter, if it was a plural. Then he used the earliest and simplest form—the "figurative" writing. If the next word represented an idea to which there was attached a symbol, (and there was a fixed catalogue of such symbols to guide him,) he figured it accordingly, and so used the advanced form of "symbolic" writing. If the next word chanced to be a verb, or something that could not be represented either absolutely or by proxy, then he wrote it down, on a phonetic system, and the phonetic system was carried out in this manner. The sound of B was represented by any one of about half a dozen natural objects chosen for the purpose, whose names begin with B; for the letter C, a small collection was set apart of animals, &c., whose names were commenced with C; and so on. The figures to be used were fixed; but for the representation of each sound, an option was given to the sculptor, among five or six objects, in order that, when executing his work, he might as much as possible avoid "tautology"—or tautofigury—too great a run upon the sun or moon, too many crocodiles or ibises. Just as when, in our own writing, the same word occurs two or three times in a few lines, we substitute for it, once at least, a synonyme, if possible; so the Egyptian writer, if he saw that he produced his crocodiles too fast, and had a care of elegance, had in the phonetic system a reserve of figures, out of which he was at liberty to pick the one which he found the least hackneyed as a substitute.

This Egyptian system of phonetics has brought us now to the borders of our A B C. But our letters are not pictures of objects. Although we tell our children that A stands for apple, and B for bull, we have not now to tell them (as the Egyptians had to teach) that apple stands for A, and bull for B. Faint traces of a pictorial alphabet we may detect—as the hissing serpent, for example, in our S; but they are very faint traces. How did the picture vanish? Here, again, Egypt serves us for an illustration. We have talked of hieroglyphics, and the hieroglyphic characters were elaborate figures of objects carved upon rocks and walls. But the Egyptians had advanced beyond rock writing, and their priests wrote upon portable material so constantly, and so much at length, that it became an object to avoid the tediousness and delay attendant upon writing as the chisel wrote. Thus, there arose the use of Hieratic characters, which were simply the Hieroglyphics, simplified into a running hand. Where the hieroglyphic was a lion, the hieratic version was a simple outline of the haunches and hind legs, as seen in the set form of the hieroglyph. There was no option allowed in the mode of drawing either the original or the abbreviation. There was only one way of drawing a lion, and only one way of abbreviating the sketch. So with other things. The hieratic characters retained no very great resemblance to anything in nature, and when it is added that a selection from these was committed to the popular use as domestic characters, for ordinary purposes, as for example, letter writing, it will be readily imagined that Egyptian *billets doux* were put together in characters nearly as far remote from picture writing as the letters which now travel through St. Martin's-le-Grand.

This sketch is enough to indicate the path by which mankind has arrived at that power which enables each individual, who learns the mystery, to seal up a selection from his thoughts within a little parcel, and to transmit it safely by hand, whithersoever he may please, for its communication to a distant friend. And now that we have seen how hardly mind has had to battle for the art of writing, let us see what difficulties have been overcome before we could attain to such materials of writing as we now possess; let us find our way to the first letter-writers, and see how they wrote, and what sort of things their letters were.

We have seen that in the first infancy of writing, in the Cradle of Letters, nothing was wanted but a rock. Communities attained to an imposing show of material power before the notion of sending written messages was acted upon with any vigor. A fragment of rock, not too large to be carried, was then broken off and used as a material. It was the first and most natural idea; but as the arts of construction supply a pressing material want, and are advanced without much difficulty, it is easy to perceive that in many nations, moderately destitute of stone, brick-making would be a discovered art before the time when there would be felt any strong necessity for sending letters. Letters coming afterwards would, in such cases, take the form of inscriptions upon brick and tile. We find this accordingly to be the case. Among the curiosities turned up at Nineveh, by Mr. Layard, are some of the Assyrian documents inscribed on this material. Well, certainly, society could not stop there. If we were still obliged to write our letters upon bricks, and build a brick wall when we made a book, or write a novel in three stakes, instead of three volumes, we should find the literature and correspondence of the country to be a somewhat heavier commodity than it is at present. The inconvenience was felt even in those days, when there were no books, and no postmen were wanted to cart bricks to people's doors; no editors to be bricked in with correspondence; only high and mighty people sent these written messages, for they were chiefly edicts, testaments, and so forth. The Ten Commandments were written, as we know, upon stone. Nations possessing lead—a metal scratched with ease—would find it a convenient substitute for stone or brick. In "Job," there is allusion made to writing materials of this kind. Flat shells would also suggest themselves as portable, and hard, and easy to be scratched. The Athenian practice of ostracism, by which the people inscribed the character of certain votes on oyster-shells, arose in this way. It was not for want of other materials, but for the sake of secrecy, that Histiæus shaved a man's head, and engraved a message on his skull, then let the hair grow, and sent him to Miletus to be shaved and read; man himself being, in this case, used as writing material, and transformed into a locomotive letter.

The very absurd question has been raised, Who was the first letter-writer? Who invented the art of letter-writing? And credit has been given on this account to Atossa, the mother of Xerxes. A letter is a message written upon something portable, and then transmitted to a distant person. It is obvious that messages of this kind would be sent, though at first very rarely, among each people, from the first month after it had passed in its development to the idea of writing on detached and reasonably light pieces of material. The idea of detached, transmissible writing having once begun to run alone and grow familiar with a people, it would soon be obvious, that the lighter the material, the better it would be for men who had to carry it about; and the more easily could a person addressed retain his information in privacy, by carrying it about his person. Leaves, especially in Oriental countries, where the leaves are large and smooth, would soon suggest themselves. The Cumæan Sibyl's prophecies were said to be inscribed on this material. Votes written upon olive-leaves, instead of oyster-shells, are also mentioned. The Hindoos are known to have used leaves, and in some parts of India and Ceylon it is said that books are still occasionally found whose paging is on leaves, in the precise and strict sense of the word. Leaves, however, would soon be found a material in various ways inconvenient, and the drier bark of trees would be preferred, especially that thin, smooth, inner bark which in some trees is exceedingly coherent, strong, and durable. The Saxons, in this country, are said to have used the bark of beech trees, called by them "boc," for writing purposes; and from this fact, our word "book" is sometimes thought to be derived. The Latin for a book means, certainly, the inner bark, and points to the use of that material. So the word "library" reminds us of the days when letters were still in their cradle. Bark tablets were prepared for use by polishing; and it was one of the amusements of a king of Persia on his travels to take bark and a knife, that he might beguile the time by rubbing them together, as an American might take a stick to whittle.

Thanks to the bees, men would not be long in finding out the excellence of honey, and the use of wax. The idea of writing upon wax, first spread over a thin board, to give to it the requisite strength, came rather late, but was extremely natural. In the time of Themistocles, these waxen tables were in use; but we find it recorded of Themistocles himself, at the same time, that he wrote a letter to the Ionians upon stone.

Bark had been used for tablets and for writing letters, which were capable of being folded up, during the best period of the Roman world, and we find them still in use under the later Emperors. The tablets were of bark on which the Emperor Commodus inscribed his list of victims, and the discovery of which led to the victimization of himself. Waxed tablets had, however, been for a long time in use, and these were written upon with an iron-pointed weapon—we might say a skewer, but the Romans said a style. From an early period, it was forbidden to wear arms within the Roman city. Tablets and styles not being interdicted, the style became (as pens have been since then, in many fingers) the only weapon handy for a stab, and men attacked or offended secured themselves by skewering their foes. Julius Cæsar, when attacked by the conspirators, wounded his first assassin with a style; and it was with their styles that the followers of Caius Gracchus killed, in a tumult, the lictor of Opimius. The well-known modern Italian *stiletto* may derive its name from such an origin.

The Egyptians arrived soon at the art of making linen; and that done, white linen would soon suggest itself as a convenient material on which to make a portable inscription. Linen was therefore used; but soon the principal idea of that age, the notion from which we derive our common name for the material on which we write, was carried out in Egypt. It was a very simple thing, an improvement on the use of tree-bark, caused by the use of peelings from a reed, called byblos, or papyrus, then very common, and now very rare in Lower Egypt. From its name, byblos, comes the Greek word signifying book, and through that channel our word for the Sacred Volume. The papyrus grew abundantly in lakes and marshes, to a height of about ten feet. The diameter of its stem is two or three inches, and from its surface peel can be taken off, layer after layer, to the number of about twenty coatings. The use of this peel soon occurred to the Egyptians as an improvement upon ordinary bark.

To prepare papyrus for use, having cut off the brush from above, and the root from below, the Egyptians cut each stem into two peices of equal lengths, and then proceeded to the peeling. The layers became smaller of course, but also whiter, as the peelers gradually approached the centre of the stem. Each strip was then extended flat, and suffered a few slight acts of preparation before another strip was placed over it, in such a manner that the fibres of the two strips crossed each other's grain, and gave strength to the whole when they were joined together; they were joined, perhaps by their own saccharine matter, or by simple vegetable gluten, beaten together, pressed, and polished. A number of these prepared and strengthened slips, having been gummed and beaten together at the edges, would form a papyrus sheet of any size; and the whole, having been thus prepared, was impregnated with oil of cedar to preserve it from corruption. Of the papyrus manufactured, there soon came to be several qualities. That made from the fine white strips in the middle was imperial, and called "August." The middle quality, used by the priests, was called "hieratic" until flattery named it, after the wife of Augustus, "Livia." The finest sort, however, being torn too easily by the hand, pointed reeds were improved in the reign of Claudius, by crossing with a more plebeian strip.

Papyrus could be written upon one side only. The introduction of this material by the Egyptians gave a great lift to the letter-writer, and to literature generally. It is, as Germans would say, the "name-father" to paper, and a very respectable and worthy elder. Books were copied into long rolls of sheet glued under sheet; the sheet which felt the first glue was called, on that account, the protocol, and our diplomatists preserve the term in their transactions.

The run upon papyrus being very great, that plant began to show some signs of scarcity in Egypt, and for that reason, among others, its exportation was at one period forbidden. At the same time the Kings of Pergamus began to be a literary sect, and wanted something whereupon their scribes might copy books. The skins of beasts, which, in a rough state, had before, in various places, been occasionally used, attracted now increased attention. They were smoothed and prepared into dry substances, called, after Pergamus, Pergament or Parchment, and vellum, which is but another way of saying skin. Here was another capital, durable thing, which found its way into the world about two or three hundred years before Christ. It was dear, however, and for common purposes papyrus was so much more convenient, that the Egyptian paper never was supplanted, until the birth of a system which got paper out of cotton, certainly not earlier than seven or eight hundred years after the first discovery of parchment. The world then worked on for something like a thousand years before we hit upon the plan of making paper out of linen rags; a very lucky thing, for up to that time the monks, who could not go to the expense of much new parchment, had been industriously scraping out the copied records of antiquity, and works of its great masters, to make room for their own opinions on things in general, and saints and miracles particularly. The gradual progress of the art of paper-making to the present day it is not now necessary to illustrate; but we may refer, in connection with this subject, to the description of a paper-mill, contained in No. 23 of this Journal.

Probably the first pen was a piece of flint, or any barbarous chisel; which would be supplanted by some kind of iron style so soon as civilization had advanced sufficiently for the attainment of an instrument in iron. These metal pens were generally found less suitable than reeds, when men had come to possess the power of writing with a colored fluid upon parchment or papyrus. The first ink probably was the dark matter from the "ink-bag" of the different species of cuttle-fish; that is what the "Indian ink," made and employed in China, ought to be, though the Chinese (horrible cheats) imitate it frequently with lampblack. Our color called sepia is the same thing, differing in character as coming from a moluse of another species. To people with weak eyes the Romans sometimes wrote with an exceedingly black ink on ivory. But even where a letter would be written on papyrus with ink and a reed, it was first put together on wax, in most cases with an iron style; for the Romans were more clever at the sword than at the pen, and it bothered the brains of an average Roman very much to write a decent letter. It was requisite to make a rough draft in the first instance, and he did this with a style on wax, where he could erase, interpolate, and botch, with comfort, till he had struck out a composition to his liking. That iron age of writing passed away, and the great thinkers of the world stirred nations with a feather. Feather and Pen are words of the same meaning, but the age of feather-writing is upon the wane, and iron has come back into the world. In fifty years we shall be again writing with metallic instruments, and Pen will then be a word whose etymology can be explained only by the story of the past, just as we have to go back now when we explain the name of Paper.

The Roman letters in the form of rolls were fastened with a seal of soft wax, on which, from the time of the first Emperors, it was usual to make an impression peculiar to the writer. The messenger by whom the packet was delivered was frequently instructed to ascertain that he made no mistake, by asking the person into whose hands the letter was delivered, whether he could tell by the impression who had written it.

As for the transmission of letters, the word "post" is a Roman word, and derives its name from people who were placed or posted at fixed distances, to run and pass from hand to hand the missives of the State. A magnificent and costly postal system was established by the Roman Emperors, but it was wholly for the use of Government and the defence of Provinces. It did not take the letters of the people, and the post-horses were only used by subjects when permission had been given by the Emperor. We have not leisure now for any connected sketch of the world's progress to (what is yet a dream) an universal postal system. But the work that has been done in this way may be estimated very fairly by any one who will turn to some details in the first pages of "Household Words," under the head "Valentine's Day at the Post Office," and remember that in this country there was little trace of any post establishment at all up to the twenty-third year of Queen Elizabeth.

Thus, then, we perceive that although there be gentlemen among us who profess to teach the art of writing in six lessons, yet a simple invitation written to a friend, and sent by post, contains the result of human activity sustained over a period of some three thousand years.

Mr. Hale, Com. Stockton, and the Supreme Court.

The "Republic" comments on the late scene in the Senate between Com. Stockton and Mr. Hale as follows:

THE SUPREME COURT AND THE SENATE.—The spirit which actuated Senator Stockton in arresting the attack of Senator Hale on the Supreme Court of the United States, was sympathized with by every man of integrity and patriotism within hearing. The manner of the Senator from New Jersey in calling Mr. Hale to order was calm and dignified, while it distinctly manifested the indignation with which he was animated. The passage to which we refer occurred during the debate in the Senate on Wednesday. Mr. Hale had said that he looked upon it as one of the main dangers of the times, as "one of the most alarming facts, that the judiciary of the land have been so swift to prostrate and to prostitute themselves before the operation of this law, (the fugitive-slave law,) so as to override, and nullify, and destroy that great safeguard of constitutional liberty, which the framers and founders of our constitution thought they had secured." Mr. Hale was speaking of the doctrines of treason as they had been laid down by our judiciary, and the allusion was understood to be to the judges of the federal courts—the only portion of our judiciary that has to deal with questions of this nature.

Immediately afterwards he made the allusion more pointed and distinct by saying, in another connexion, "there is a triubnal that sits *beneath this Senate chamber which is the very citadel of American slavery.*" When this direct reference was made to the Supreme Court, Commodore Stockton rose, and in a quiet and firm way declared that, as an American citizen and Senator, he could not sit there and hear such language without doing something to arrest the course of the debate, and called the Senator to order.

Mr. Hale was for once in his life, and for a few moments, abashed and thrown from his self-possession, for it was evident that Com. Stockton had with him the feeling not only of the Senators but of the spectators. The Senator from New Hampshire sought refuge in a denial of which we will give him the full benefit, though we had felt, with Com. Stockton, at the time Mr. Hale spoke of the "prostration and prostitution of the judiciary," that his allusion was to the members of the court that "sat beneath"—the Supreme Court of the United States. He denied, however, that he intended such an allusion, and asserted that in using the words "prostration and prostitution," he did not intend to apply them to that tribunal. "This remark," he said, "did not apply to the Supreme Court of the United States, because no case, growing out of the fugitive slave law, had ever come before them." If Mr. Hale did *not* allude to the Supreme Court, we presume that he must have alluded to the circuit and district courts of the United States, or to the judges of the State courts; and we think it quite as indecent for a Senator to utter a sweeping charge of "prostration and prostitution" against these tribunals as against the Supreme Court itself.

THE REV. MR. GALLAHER, OF MISSOURI.—"It is with pleasure," says the "Union," "that we see the services of this well-known pastor engaged in the District of Columbia. In Tennessee and other States of the West he has long been favorably known, and has done much to promote the cause of true piety and religion."

The invitation and acceptance have relation only to the present winter, the period Mr. Gallaher had previously fixed upon for his residence in our city; but we trust it may be found compatible with the desires of the church and his own inclinations to form a more durable connexion. We have many able, eloquent and estimable pastors in the various Christian churches of this city, but it appears to us that the complement is not made up without the peculiar order of instruction supplied by Mr. G. His preaching is like an exhaustless fountain of knowledge, replete with instruction, and eminently suggestive to the enlightened and curious mind, while his appeals ever prompt the hearer to resolution and to action; and yet he is entirely free from a single thought of grace, beauty or studied effect, in voice or gesture. Plain to homeliness and simplicity itself, he fails to win the admiration until his sincerity and store of thought and information have been impressed upon the mind of the hearer.

CASE OF DR. GARDNER.—During the sitting of the criminal court, on Saturday last, J. M. Carlisle, esq., prayed the designation of a day for taking up the case of Dr. G. A. Gardner, charged with fraudulently obtaining money under the Mexican indemnity claims. He moved that the 10th January be named for commencing the trial. The United States district attorney (Mr. Fendall) stated that much difficulty had been experienced in ascertaining the whereabouts of witnesses, and procuring their attendance, and therefore objected to fixing any special day. The court declined ruling it for any particular day, but hoped it would be considered and disposed of during the present term.—*Republic.*

BRIBING VOTERS.—The grand jury of Washington county (Md.) circuit court has presented several persons for bribery, or attempted bribery, at the last election. The offence is a serious one under the new constitution—the penalty being fine, imprisonment, and disfranchisement.
[*Balt. Argus.*

Of the whole number of fifteen hundred dramshops in Boston, only four hundred and ninety are kept by Americans. We are proud of that.